

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 2371

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, SU

SUBJECT: GOS AND SSU LEADERSHIP CHANGES

REF: KHARTOUM 2355

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. REFTEL REPORTED THAT PRESIDENT NIMEIRI, IN HIS AUG 9 "FACE THE NATION" TELEVISION ADDRESS, ANNOUNCED IMPORTANT GOVERNMENT AND SSU CHANGES. SET OUT BELOW ARE NAMES OF NEWLY ASSIGNED INDIVIDUALS WITH THEIR NEW TITLES AND POSITION HELD AT TIME OF APPOINTMENT.

A. EL RASHID EL TAHIR, VICE PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER (FORMERLY SPEAKER OF PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY).

B. MAJ ABUL GASIM MOHAMED IBRAHIM, SSU SECRETARY GENERAL AND COMMISSIONER OF KHARTOUM (FORMERLY SSU DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL AND MINAG).

C. DR MANSOUR KHALID, COUNSELOR TO PRESIDENT FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (FORMERLY MINED).

D. MAHDI MUSTAFA EL HADI, LEADER OF PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY (FORMERLY COMMISSIONER OF KHARTOUM).

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E. FIRST LTGEN BESHIR MOHAMED ALI, MINISTER OF DEFENSE

AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF PEOPLE'S ARMED FORCES (FORMERLY LTGEN AND CHIEF OF STAFF).

F. DAFALLA EL HAJ YOUSIF, MINISTER OF EDUCATION (FORMERLY MANAGING DIRECTOR SUDANESE TEXTILE FACTORY AND PRESIDENT SUDANESE INDUSTRIES ASSN.).

G. ABASS ABDEL MAGID, MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND NATURAL RESOURCES (FORMERLY MANAGING DIRECTOR AL-DAMAZIN AGRICULTURAL CO. (SUDANESE-SAUDI CO.) AND FORMER MINSTATE FOR AGR. PRODUCTION).

H. ALI SHUMMO, MINSTATE FOR YOUTH AND SPORTS (FORMERLY WITH UAE GOVERNMENT ON SECONDMENT AND FORMER U/SEC MINISTRY OF INFORMATION.

2. COMMENTING ON CHANGES, NIMEIRI WAS REPORTED BY SUNA AS SAYING THAT AIM OF HIS RESHUFFLE WAS TO PROMOTE POLITICAL AND EXECUTIVE ACTION AND TO GIVE ROOM FOR MORE PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE IN LEADERSHIP. HE SAID PARTICIPATION OF PEOPLE IN NATIONAL ACTION WOULD BE SAFEGUARD AGAINST PLOTTING TO SEIZE POWER. HE ADDED FURTHER CHANGES WOULD TAKE PLACE ON CONVENING OF SECOND NATIONAL CONFERENCE WHICH SCHEDULED FOR NEXT JANUARY.

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3. COMMENT: NIMEIRI'S STATEMENT TENDS TO SUPPORT OUR INITIAL REACTION (REFTEL) THAT HE WISHES TO DELEGATE RESPONSIBILITY TO OTHERS. MOREOVER, WE UNDERSTAND THAT THIS MOVE IS BEING WELCOMED BY SUDANESE WHO INTERPRET IT AS BEING AT LEAST IN RIGHT DIRECTION, AWAY FROM COMPLETELY ONE-MAN RULE.

4. WE THINK NIMEIRI ALSO FEELS NEED TO TIGHTEN UP ADMINISTRATION OF GOVERNMENT. NEW MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE AND EDUCATION COME TO THEIR JOBS WITH GOOD REPUTATIONS FOR EFFECTIVENESS. MINAG, FOR EXAMPLE, IS TECHNOCRAT WHO IS TAKING OVER WHAT IS LIKELY TO BECOME ONE OF VERY MOST
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IMPORTANT PORTFOLIOS IN GOVERNMENT. NIMEIRI'S DESIRE FOR GREATER EFFICIENCY HAS ALSO BEEN SHOWN BY RECENT MOVES TO AVOID RED TAPE IN CONNECTION WITH VARIOUS US INITIATIVES CURRENTLY UNDERWAY.

5. NEW PRIMIN HAS BEEN A KEY ADVISOR TO NIMEIRI, AND DR. MANSOUR KHALID HAS BEEN HIS UNOFFICIAL ADVISOR ON FOREIGN POLICY FOR SOME TIME. MAJOR ABUL GASIM, WHO HAS

BEEN WITH NIMEIRI SINCE BEGINNING, WAS IN SENSE "KICKED UPSTAIRS", ALTHOUGH HE CLEARLY WILL RETAIN IMPORTANT RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN SSU. NEW MINISTER OF DEFENSE IS PROBABLY BEING REWARDED FOR HIS LOYALTY DURING EARLY JULY COUP ATTEMPT.

6. IT NOW REMAINS TO BE SEEN HOW MUCH ACTUAL AUTHORITY NIMEIRI DELEGATES TO NEW PRIMIN AND SYG OF SSU. SOME OBSERVERS BELIEVE TAHIR WILL MAKE MORE CABINET CHANGES IN EFFORT TO PUT TOGETHER TEAM THAT WILL BE 'HIS'. THIS, TOGETHER WITH NIMEIRI'S OWN REMARKS SUGGEST THAT OTHER CABINET CHANGES CAN BE EXPECTED IN NOT TOO DISTANT FUTURE. ON BALANCE, WE THINK US INTERESTS WILL BE SERVED BY NIMEIRI'S MOVES TOWARD GREATER DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY AND GREATER TECHNICAL COMPETENCE WITHIN HIS CABINET. ON OTHER HAND, WE EXPECT HIM TO REMAIN DOMINANT LEADER AND DECISION-MAKER IN SUDAN. BOGOSIAN

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